GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:218
ANSWERED ON:20.10.2008
PUBLIC TELEPHONE BOOTHS
Maharia Shri Subhash

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of Public Telephone booths functioning in the country during the last three years and the current year;

(b) the number of telephone booths lying non-functional out of them during the current year;

(c) whether in face of competition from the new technology Multimedia Kiosks, a large number of such Public Telephone booths are struggling to sustain themselves;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to improve the situation?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA)

(a) The total number of Public Telephone booths (PCOs) operated by the franchisee of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (BSNL) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd. (MTNL) and BSNL/MTNL in the country during the last three years and the current year are given as follows:

Status as on	No. of PCOs (Excluding VPTs)
31.3.2006	2385595
31.3.2007	2365570
31.3.2008	2290541
30.9.2008	2180339

(b) Nil.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) & (e) Do not arise in view of (c) above.However,the measures taken to improve the business of PCO operators by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (BSNL) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd. (MTNL) are given below:

BSNL

(i) PCO operators have been allowed to convert their PCOs into "BSNL Shoppes" to sell various services/products of BSNL and earn discount on the same.

(ii) Discount structure has been made competitive.

(iii) Upgradation of PCO into Information Technology Kiosks.

(iv) Incentive in terms of free talk time.

MTNL

(i) Enhancement of commission of PCOs.

(ii) Improvement in the terms & conditions of PCOs.

(iii) Reduction in security deposit and minimum guarantee from PCO franchisee.